

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: _____ E. _____

Date: _____ February 23, 2005 _____

Topic: First Review of a Recommendation to Continue Program Approval of the Teacher Preparation Program at Ferrum College

Presenter: Dr. Thomas A. Elliott, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Teacher Education and Licensure

Telephone Number: (804) 371-2522

E-Mail Address: Thomas A. Elliott@doe.virginia.gov

Origin:

_____ Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

X Board review required by

_____ State or federal law or regulation

X Board of Education regulation

_____ Other: _____

X Action requested at this meeting: Waive first review and approve request for accreditation.

_____ Action requested at future meeting: _____ (date)

Previous Review/Action:

X No previous board review/action

_____ Previous review/action

date _____

action _____

Background Information:

The Regulations Governing Approved Programs for Virginia Institutions of Higher Education, effective July 1, 2001, require colleges and universities that offer programs for the preparation of professional educators to obtain program approval from the Board of Education. In Virginia, the review and approval of programs is viewed as the shared responsibility of institutions of higher education, school divisions, and the Department of Education. Final approval rests with the Board of Education.

During the 1998 Session of the Virginia General Assembly, an amendment to current legislation mandated that “persons seeking initial licensure who graduate from Virginia institutions of higher education shall, on or after July 1, 2002, only be licensed as instructional personnel by the Board of Education if the endorsement areas offered at such institution have been assessed by a national

accrediting agency or by a state approval process, with final accreditation by the Board of Education.” “Accreditation” means a process for assessing and enhancing academic and educational quality through voluntary peer review. This process informs the public that an institution has a professional education unit or department that has met standards of educational quality.

The regulations governing approved programs define the standards that must be met and the review procedures that must be followed to obtain and maintain board approval. The regulations currently provide two options for the review of teacher education programs: 1) the state review process for which the college or university must meet the standards established by Board of Education regulations, and 2) the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) process for which the college or university must meet the NCATE standards and the board’s teaching area requirements. In both, the institution hosts an on-site visit by a team of trained reviewers who develop a report of findings in which a recommendation is made with regard to the status of the program as approval for continued full accreditation, approval with stipulations, or program denial.

Summary of Major Elements

During spring 2004, six Virginia colleges and universities were scheduled for an on-site program review. Of the six, two were reviewed using the NCATE process and four were reviewed under the Board of Education process. Ferrum College was reviewed under the Board’s review procedures and with changes in personnel at the college following the review, the recommendation for action by the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) was delayed.

The regulations governing approved programs set forth 20 standards in the following four categories:

- I. Program Design
- II. Faculty
- III. Candidates, and
- IV. Program Operation/Accountability.

The review team makes a recommendation of met or not met for each of the 20 standards. In addition, the team makes a recommendation of approved, approved with stipulations, or denied for the teacher preparation program as a whole. One of these three recommendations is made for each endorsement program offered by the institution.

The team recommendation for the Ferrum College teacher preparation program is that the program be approved with stipulations. As defined in the approved program regulations, a recommendation of approved with stipulations is made when the professional education program and the endorsement areas have met the standards minimally and significant weaknesses have been identified. The review team cited as not met five of the 20 standards.

The following weaknesses were included under these five standards:

Standard 4: The professional education unit ensures that candidates acquire and learn the knowledge and skills to become competent to work with a variety of students.

- There is insufficient evidence that the unit ensures that candidates acquire and learn the knowledge and skills to become competent to work with exceptional learners.
- The unit needs to provide more extensive training in the teaching of reading and language arts, especially to K-12 students who have difficulty learning to read, as well as in the assessment of student performance, the interpretation of data to direct differentiated instruction, and management of students.

Standard 12: The professional education unit ensures that candidates' competence to begin their professional role in schools is assessed prior to completion of the program or recommendation for licensure.

- More complete data for Praxis I and Praxis II assessments are needed.
- Exit criteria for candidates should involve assessments by faculty prior to the student teaching experience; educational competencies are not identified in a manner that is systematically assessed.

Standard 13: The professional education unit recruits, hires, and retains a highly qualified higher education faculty of diverse background who are teacher scholars, are qualified for their assignments and are actively engaged in the professional community.

- The number of faculty members holding a terminal degree (i.e., earned doctorate) in education is at an unacceptable level to maintain a quality teacher education program.

Standard 15: The professional education unit ensures that there are systematic and comprehensive activities to enhance the competence and intellectual vitality of the professional education faculty.

- Institutional support for faculty professional development is minimal. Sufficient monetary support and release/leave time for faculty to participate in professional development activities are not evident in program budget line items.

Standard 20: The professional education unit has adequate resources to offer quality programs that reflect the mission of the professional education unit and support teaching and scholarship by faculty and candidates.

- Faculty offices are not easily accessible to students, nor is there meeting space within the departmental area for candidates and teacher education faculty.

When approval with stipulations is recommended, the institution must submit a plan of corrective action to the Department of Education. Ferrum College has provided a response to the standards that were not met.

2002-2003 Praxis I: Reading, Writing, Mathematics Assessments for Program Completers

Ferrum College	PPST READING	CBT READING	COMPUTER-IZED PPST READING	PPST WRITING	CBT WRITING	COMPUTER-IZED PPST WRITING	PPST MATHEMATICS	CBT MATHEMATICS	COMPUTER-IZE DPPST MATHEMATICS	AGGREGATE-- BASIC SKILLS	AGGREGATE ACADEMIC CONTENT	SUMMARY TOTALS AND PASS RATES
Number Taking Assessment	1	8		2	7		1	8		9	7	9
Number Passing Assessment	*	*		*	*		*	*		*	*	*
Institutional Pass Rate	*	*		*	*		*	*		*	*	*

*At least ten (10) program completers must have taken the same assessment in an academic year for the data on the assessment to be reported by Educational Testing Service (ETS).

2002-2003 Praxis II Assessments for Program Completers

Ferrum College	No. of Students	Test Area	Number Passing	Pass Rate
	3	Elem. Ed. Content	*	*
	1	Math. Content	*	*
	3	Soc. Stud. Content	*	*
	2	Health & PE	*	*

*At least ten (10) program completers must have taken the same assessment in an academic year for the data on the assessment to be reported by Educational Testing Service (ETS).

2002-2003 Declaration of Admissions for Ferrum College (Praxis II Scores)

No. of Students	Test Area	Score/Score Range	% Pass
4	Elem. Ed.	157-164	100%
3	Health & PE	153-181	100%
3	Soc. Studies	183-187	100%
2	Math	149-153	100%
1	Art	166	100%

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education waive first review and approve with stipulations the teacher preparation program at Ferrum College with a detailed report of corrective action to be submitted by the college on or before May 23, 2005, (90 days) following action by the board.

Impact on Resources:

Expenses incurred during on site review of teacher education programs are funded by the hosting institution.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

Teacher preparation programs reviewed under the state approval process are conducted on a five-year cycle. Programs that do not meet standards for continuing full approval may be reviewed as needed. Following submission of the detailed report of corrective action, an on site review of the program will be scheduled.